

Department of Sociology & Anthropology Statement on Racialized Violence in the United States and Canada

As sociologists and anthropologists, we have been watching events unfold in the United States following the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer. We have also watched for years as many Black, Indigenous, and racialized people in the United States and Canada, have lost their lives at the hands of police violence.

We firmly believe that this systematic violence must stop. We unequivocally condemn all forms of racism, as well as all forms of violence. As social scientists, we are closely following the resultant protests now taking place across North America; while we naturally hope peace and kindness will prevail, we also understand the anger that has arisen as a direct result of generations of racist violence, colonialism, segregation, and inequality – and the resistance that it has now engendered.

Through our teaching and research, we prioritize anti-racism, decolonization, and racial justice as cornerstones of our work. We pledge to work harder each day to foster a community of inclusiveness, respect, and solidarity among our faculty, staff, and students. We take pride when our students embark on work that creates a more just world and eliminates oppression, and we need to do the same.

As a first step, the Department will immediately strike a Racial Justice Working Group, which will include faculty, staff, and students, to develop an action plan by October 20, 2020. This group will provide recommendations to address issues of racial inequality, both in the university and in the larger society. The Working Group will develop initiatives such as designation of time for support and mentorship of our department's Indigenous and racialized students, conduct a survey to gather our student's concerns and experiences to improve our program, and create connections with anti-racist organizations.

As scholars, it is up to us to identify and speak against societal discrimination and hate. Being silent is complicit and we have been silent too long. We will use our sociological and anthropological expertise to inform, speak out, and resist, and that starts now.

--Members of the Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Mount Royal University